

CITIZEN TRANSPORTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Arizona Department of Transportation
Traffic Operations Center
2302 West Durango Street
Phoenix, Arizona
September 18, 2001

MEETING MINUTES

A Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC) meeting was held at the Arizona Department of Transportation, Traffic Operations Center, 2302 West Durango Street, Phoenix, Arizona on September 18, 2001 with Chairman William G. Beyer presiding.

Members Present:

William G. Beyer, Chairman
Brian Campbell, Member-At-Large
Jim Lykins, Maricopa County District 2
Ron Gawlitta, Maricopa County District 3
Tom Liddy, Maricopa County District 1

Members Absent:

Paul Schwartz, Maricopa County District 4

Others Present:

Dr. Peter Johnston, Pinnacle West
Ed Johnson, Citizen
Kwi-Sung Kang, ADOT
Carolyn Deobler, ADOT
Dan Lance, ADOT
Blue Crowley, Citizen

John McGee, ADOT
Alan Deobler, Citizen
Howard Boice, ADOT, CRO
Chuck Eaton, ADOT
Elizabeth Neville, ADOT
Tim Wolfe, ADOT

1. Call To Order:

The Citizen's Oversight Transportation Committee was given a tour of the Traffic Operation Center prior to the start of the meeting.

Chairman Beyer called the Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m..

2. Approval of Minutes of July 19, 2001 Meeting:

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Chairman Beyer called for a motion. Ron Gawlitta moved to approve the minutes of the CTOC meeting held on July 19, 2001 as circulated. Brian Campbell seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Beyer stated the meeting held a couple weeks ago in the northwest valley was very successful.

3. Staff Report

Chuck Eaton, ADOT, reported the following information:

- A risk analysis of revenues and costs is done annually. The Construction Panel will meet September 26 and the Revenue Panel will meet September 27.
- MAG solicited input as to project needs throughout the region in preparation for programming projects in the next five year program update. We are at the point where MAG, ADOT staff and RPTA will review the input received, along with identified priorities, to reach a consensus of what the next projects program should be. He suggested the Committee review the recommendations that come out of the process and provide additional input at the November meeting.
- The Transportation Board discussed the needs on Grand Avenue in the Surprise area and some of the things ADOT and Peoria are working on in the Loop 101/Union Hills area.
- We opened the Pima Freeway from 19th Avenue to Scottsdale Road. The 56th Street TI will be completed by the end of the month.
- Red Mountain Freeway – Country Club to Gilbert: We anticipate a December opening on this project.
- Three projects will be awarded at Friday's Board meeting (September 21): Grand Avenue, 27th Avenue and Thomas and the 91st Avenue ramps; the Pinnacle Road TI improvement on I-17; and two TI improvements on the Superstition Freeway at Dobson and Alma School Roads.

4. ADOT Program Funding Analysis

John McGee, ADOT Chief Financial Officer, gave a overhead presentation regarding the impact of legislative and budget issues on the Tentative Five-Year Program Cash Flow Analysis. Copies of his presentation were provided to CTOC members.

Questions and comments regarding the presentation were as follows:

- In response to Chairman Beyer's question, Mr. McGee said, based on information received within the last ten days, it appears FY 2003 federal funding could drop by about \$90 million. He explained the OMB just issued its mid-session review and has fairly significantly decreased its revenue forecast from all revenue sources within the federal government. He stated they will not know the final number until January. He said they are looking at a number of options for keeping the program together.

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- Mr. Liddy asked if the increase in deficit spending after last week's terrorist attacks, specifically in terms of air transportation, will change the numbers. Mr. McGee said the financial impacts of last week's terrorist attacks are a major concern.
- Mr. Gawlitta asked why they have not been given information regarding the state's anticipated financial position after the expiration of the sales tax. Mr. McGee stated there will be little, if any, ability to do additional construction after 2007. He noted the ½ cent sales tax debt will be paid off six month's before the tax expires. He said the state's debt program is one of the highest rated transportation debt programs in the nation.
- Chairman Beyer said the need for a ½ cent sales tax is one of the most energetic debates going on within MAG and the Vision 21 Task Force.
- Chairman Beyer stated the Committee has to update the legislature on the status of the Regional freeway system once a year. He asked Mr. McGee to review the Committee's annual report to ensure the Committee's comments reflect the true impact of the legislative issues.

5. ADOT ITS Program

Tim Wolfe, Assistant State Engineer, ADOT, gave a power point presentation on ADOT's Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) program, including intelligent vehicles, commercial vehicle operations, Tucson's Freeway Management System, the Highway Condition Reporting System, Rural ITS, AZTECH, the Freeway Management System and ADOT's Traffic Operations Center. Information Guides were provided to members of the Committee.

Questions and comments regarding the presentation were as follows:

- Chairman Beyer asked if ADOT is working with MAG's ITS Committee. Mr. Wolfe stated they are, noting MAG just completed their ITS strategic plan.

6. Hydrogen an Alternative Fuel in Transportation

Dr. Peter Johnston, Manager, Technology Department, Pinnacle West Capital Corporation, gave a power point presentation on the use of hydrogen fuel for transportation, noting there are three hydrogen refueling stations in the country to date. He stated construction of their refueling station began last year and the compressed natural gas pump is almost complete. He said they received permits for the hydrogen refueling station a couple weeks ago. He reviewed the process for converting natural gas and hydrogen into fuel and the safety procedures involved in dispensing the fuel. He briefly described the modifications made to vehicles that allow them to utilize hydrogen fuel. He noted hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe and has the highest energy content per count of any other fuel. He said the cost of hydrogen equates to approximately \$2.00 per gallon, whereas the hydrogen blend costs approximately 96¢ per gallon. He stated hydrogen could completely replace natural gas without the need to build a totally new generating infrastructure.

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Questions and comments regarding the presentation were as follows:

- Chairman Beyer asked if Pinnacle West has done any public relations studies relative to the public's acceptance of hydrogen as a fuel. Mr. Johnston stated they have not, however, the National Hydrogen Association has been very active in that respect.
- Mr. Eaton asked if accidents would be a bigger concern. Mr. Johnston said the tanks are very carefully tested, noting hydrogen is really no different in that respect than gasoline. He noted leaking hydrogen does not pool like gasoline, making it safer in that respect.

7. Call to the Public:

Blue Crowley, citizen, asked how the Governor's Vision 21 Task Force and CTOC are blending. He also asked how CTOC, as the only public body, would influence the new state and regional MPO's. He expressed concern about the potential for war and the effect it would have on oil. He questioned where the Committee is addressing mass transit, noting the Committee's original mandate said to review both MAG and the RPTA's proposition for funding. He suggested that, if Phoenix is not going to complete the I-10 express terminal, they should abandon it to ADOT who could then use some of the Vehicle License Tax to complete the job. He asked about the sunset law. He pointed out that 100 miles of the regional freeway system originally set for completion by 2007 will not be completed, most of which is on the west side of the valley. He asked why the Committee is not discussing mass transit and heavy rail. He said government employees should be required to take public transportation one day a week. He stated Grand Avenue does not comply with TEA-21 in terms of bicycle paths. He noted he was originally appointed to the CTOC, however, the Board of Supervisors turned him down, stating he did not live outside the City of Phoenix. He pointed out there are no buses at several of the proposed light rail stops.

7. Next Meeting Date:

CTOC Public Meeting
City of Mesa
Thursday, October 25, 2001
6:00 p.m.

CTOC Meeting
ADOT Board Room, #145-147
206 South 17th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Tuesday, November 20, 2001
5:00 p.m.

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8. CTOC Member Reports:

Chairman Beyer said CTOC has done its best to develop a cooperative environment, however, it is in a state of flux due to the political realities of what is taking place within MAG. He agreed the Committee should revisit the Sunset Law in regards to the ½ cent sales tax.

Ron Gawlitta, CTOC member, said he was pleased to see S.R. 85 accelerated.

9. Closing Comments and Adjournment:

Chairman Beyer called for any further public input and there was none.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.